

Rose Pond Conservation Area

Ten-Year Area Management Plan FY 2015-2024




Wildlife Division Chief

10/2/15
Date

Rose Pond Conservation Area Management Plan Approval Page

PLANNING TEAM

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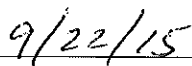
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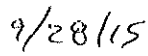

Signature


Date

WILDLIFE DIVISION

Unit Chief


Signature


Date

OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Rose Pond Conservation Area, #8417
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1983
- **Acreage:** 379 acres
- **County:** Clark
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Statements of Purpose:**

A. Strategic Direction

Rose Pond Conservation Area (CA) was purchased because it contains critical habitat for several wetland species. Management of the area is focused on encouraging healthy populations of wetland wildlife and providing permanent emergent marsh habitat, while offering the public compatible outdoor recreational opportunities.

B. Desired Future Condition

The desired future condition of Rose Pond CA is a permanent emergent marsh in Rose Pond and the adjacent man-made wetland. The habitat surrounding the wetlands is old-field and native grass plantings, maintained as early successional habitat for species of concern. Maintain a dove hunting program that is compatible with species of concern habitat requirements.

C. Federal Aid Statement

N/A

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

I. Special Considerations

A. Priority Areas: Rose Pond Terrestrial Conservation Opportunity Area, Buck Run Creek Priority Watershed

B. Natural Areas: None

II. Important Natural Features and Resources

A. Species of Conservation Concern: Species of conservation concern are known from this area. Area Managers should consult the Natural Heritage Database annually and review all management activities with the Natural History Biologist.

B. Caves: None

C. Springs: None

III. Existing Infrastructure

- 1 parking lot
- 1 16.2-acre wetland pool - Rose Pond (contains concrete water control structure, bound by a degraded levee, contains valve)
- 1 21.9-acre man-made wetland
- 3 fishless ponds (~ 0.5 acres)
- Unimproved road (allows access to the inholding and ditch)
- 45-foot deep irrigation well
- 7,760 feet of levee, managed by the Mississippi Fox Levee and Drainage District #2

IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations

A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:

- The Lone Star Levee District has a long-term maintenance agreement attached to the Rose Pond land title. The drainage districts consolidated and Lone Star Levee District is now part of the Mississippi Fox Levee and Drainage District #2. This agreement allows the levee district to take soil from Rose Pond CA for levee maintenance. The location of soil removal is at the discretion of the Area Manager.
- David M. and Charlotte Fox donated a tract of land (27.25 acres) for providing a refuge with no hunting allowed. The General Warranty Deed on this tract states “this restriction shall run with the land until such time as the Conservation Commission obtains fee interest in the 2.75-acre tract.” The 2.75-acre tract is an inholding on the area.

B. Federal Interest: Federal funds may be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.

C. Easements:

- A lease agreement exists to allow access to a 2.75-acre tract that William Logan and his wife Joan reserve as a life estate. An additional 200-foot wide tract, extending 400 feet west is included in the lease. This addition was made as the 2.75-acre tract fell short of reaching the water in Rose Pond. After the addition of this tract, Bill Logan deeded his property to the Missouri Department of Conservation (the Department). The lease agreement gave William and Joan Logan the right to use these tracts for hunting purposes only. Hunting blinds may be constructed and trees may be cut for blind construction only. This lease is limited to William and Joan Logan, immediate family and William Logan’s hunting companions. This lease agreement also

states that the “Lessee agrees to release in writing refuge status of leased Premises.” This property was conveyed to the Department in 1996.

- John Winkleman, the landowner on the south side of Rose Pond CA, has an easement that states that the ditch through the center of the area must remain open and unobstructed. This easement enables the landowner to enter upon lands adjacent to the ditch for clearing or maintenance purposes, with the right included to dump excavated fill along the banks of the ditch.
- United Cities Gas Company, who consolidated with Great River Gas Company of Keokuk, Iowa, owns a 40-foot easement for a 6-inch natural gas pipeline. This pipeline runs diagonally across Rose Pond CA, from the southwest corner to the northeast corner.

D. Cultural Resources Findings: No known cultural resources.

E. Hazards and Hazardous Materials: None observed.

F. Endangered Species: Endangered Species are known from this area. Area Managers should consult the Natural Heritage Database annually and review all management activities with the Natural History Biologist.

G. Boundary Issues: None

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations

Rose Pond CA was purchased for the conservation of several species of conservation concern. Managing uplands for these species benefits other non-game and game species alike.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Management of the Area’s species of conservation concern poses a challenge due to the variety of habitat types required to complete their life cycles.
- 2) The main challenge is timing upland management activities (e.g., prescribed burning and disking) without disturbing the Area’s species of conservation concern. Activities should be planned with the species’ active season and habits in mind.

Management Objective 1: Manage the prairies and old fields to benefit early successional wildlife and threatened and endangered species.

Strategy 1: Conduct prescribed burns in the prairie and old fields to maintain native plant integrity and structure, and reduce thatch. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Exclude invasive plants from prairie and old fields. (Wildlife)

Strategy 3: Manage old fields by burning, disking, spraying, mowing, and/or dozing, to maintain early successional habitat. (Wildlife)

Management Objective 2: Manage open lands to provide food and cover for wildlife and dove hunting opportunities.

Strategy 1: Manage open fields for the benefit of all wildlife, with species of conservation concern receiving priority consideration. This may necessitate a reduction in the quantity of agricultural fields planted, the timing of planting and disking or the orientation of the fields in the landscape. (Wildlife)

VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

The wetlands of Rose Pond CA provide habitat for rare species, waterfowl and invertebrates. These wetlands include natural wetlands (16.2 acre-Rose Pond and three smaller pools) and a man-made wetland (21.9 acres).

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) A water control structure allows for flexibility of water depth at the man-made wetland.
- 2) Water level manipulation in Rose Pond proper is not possible because there is no water control structure in the unit. The addition of a structure is not feasible at this time because higher water elevations in Rose Pond cause drainage issues on adjoining private land.
- 3) Rose Pond's shallow depth increases the threat of dewatering due to evaporation in the summer months.
- 4) Honey Creek, a tributary to the Fox River, flows through the northeast corner of Rose Pond CA. This stream has been channelized and leveed within the Mississippi River floodplain. These actions have severely degraded the aquatic habitat within the stream channel.

Management Objective 1: Manage wetlands for rare species.

Strategy 1: Maintain wetland perimeters and emergent vegetation with little woody or thick herbaceous components that may block access from the water to the adjoining uplands. The Natural History Biologist should be consulted prior to using pesticides of any kind as some species of conservation concern have sensitivities to some of them. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Add woody debris to wetlands to provide substrate for species of interest. (Wildlife)

Strategy 3: To conserve the aquatic community, do not intentionally de-water Rose Pond or the wetland unit completely. (Wildlife)

Strategy 4: Deepen portions of wetlands to ensure that some water will remain standing, even in drought conditions. (Wildlife)

Management Objective 2: Maintain a forested corridor along Honey Creek.

Strategy 1: Maintain a forested corridor on the portion of Rose Pond CA outside of the flood protection levee along Honey Creek. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: All management activities on Rose Pond CA should follow the *Watershed and Stream Management Guidelines for Lands Managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation* (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2009). (Wildlife)

VII. Public Use Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Rose Pond CA offers numerous public use opportunities, including fishing, hunting and wetland bird viewing. Hunting is one of the main reasons many people visit Rose Pond in the fall. The dove season opener is the busiest time of the year with hunter numbers historically well over 200 during times that weather and dove numbers are good. Waterfowl hunting is available on the north wetland unit when habitat conditions are favorable for waterfowl use. Limited small game hunting opportunities exist for quail, rabbits and frogs.
- 2) Primitive camping is permitted in one designated area. This area is a graveled parking lot with a grassy adjacent area. Walk-in camping is allowed anytime, except during firearms deer and turkey seasons. No amenities are provided.

Management Objective 1: Provide quality hunting for mourning doves.

Strategy 1: Continue to provide quality dove fields, while considering the needs of species of conservation concern. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Consider changing area regulations to allow only non-toxic shot as allowed by the evolving Department statewide policy. (Wildlife)

Management Objective 2: Manage for a variety of small game species and waterfowl without degrading habitat for species of concern.

Strategy 1: Manage the area's diverse habitats for a variety of wildlife species. (Wildlife)

Management Objective 3: Provide designated basic camping and picnic areas.

Strategy 1: Maintain the parking lot and the adjacent grassed areas minimally during the summer. Prior to the hunting seasons, mow these areas so they are user-friendly and aesthetically pleasing. (Forestry)

VIII. Administrative Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) The 27.25-acre tract was designated a refuge (as it was deeded to the Department). As currently laid out, refuge signage is difficult to maintain. It is important to allow trapping in this refuge to remove furbearers detrimental to the species of conservation concern.
- 2) The drainage system through the conservation area drains from south to north with private land on both sides. This has made wetland development on the area a challenge.

Management Objective 1: Revise the refuge boundary.

Strategy 1: Change the refuge boundary to the degraded levee of Rose Pond on the north; move the eastern boundary further east out of the bulrush (so it is visible), and so that prescribed fire will not destroy the refuge signs. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Review the deed, evaluate the waterfowl refuge boundary, make changes as appropriate and allow other trapping, hunting and fishing activities. (Wildlife)

Lands Proposed for Acquisition:

When available, adjacent land may be considered for acquisition from willing sellers. Tracts that improve area access, provide public use opportunities, contain unique natural communities and/or species of conservation concern, or meet other Department priorities, as identified in the annual Department land acquisition priorities, may be considered.

MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE

Strategies are considered ongoing unless listed in the following table:

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APPENDICES

Area Background:

In 1983, two tracts were purchased, totaling 351.9 acres. The following year David M. and Charlotte Fox donated 27.25 acres, and in 1996, Bill Logan and his wife Joan conveyed 2.75 acres on which they reserve a life estate. This brings Rose Pond CA to its current size of 382 acres. The acquisition of Rose Pond was of particular interest to the Department because it provided critical habitat for several species of conservation concern.

Rose Pond CA is believed to be a very small remnant of a once extensive marsh system associated with the mouth of the Des Moines River. The deep, sandy soil found here is assumed to have been deposited by the Des Moines River. This soil type is classified as Sparta. Rose Pond contains a heavy clay Wabash soil.

Historically, the area surrounding Rose Pond was farmed using a rotation of corn, beans and wheat. Rose Pond was often hunted for waterfowl by the Logan and Fox families and their friends. Dove hunting was very popular on the sandy soils surrounding Rose Pond.

According to the general land office survey conducted in 1820, prairie covered all the sandy area around Rose Pond. However, due to the long history of farming these lands, no native sand prairie exists. Since acquisition by the Department, approximately 40 acres of native grasses have been planted to species that can survive on sandy soils.

Water drains from the south to the north through Rose Pond CA. This drainage system drains the privately owned farmland south of the conservation area. This system has impeded the development of wetlands on the area. In an attempt to create more wetlands, depressions were blasted with ammonia nitrate in March 1995. Several small depressions, 15 feet in diameter and up to 2 feet deep, resulted. In 2003, three depressions were created using a tractor and scraper. These depressions were long and shallow and were between 0.2 and 0.3 acres each. In 2005 the Department constructed a 15-acre wetland unit north of Rose Pond, and independent of the drainage ditch that transverses the area. In 2008, the levee broke just east of this unit, creating a large scour hole that is connected to the man-made wetland during wet periods.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Feet	% of Area
Old Fields	88.2		49.4
Cropland	70.4		19.0
Grassland	40.8		10.7
Bottomland Forest	40.5		10.6
Wetland	38.1		10.0
Parking Lots and Roads	1		0.3
Total	379		100
Stream Frontage		1,750	

Public Input Summary:

The draft Rose Pond Conservation Area Management Plan was available for a public comment period April 1–30, 2015. The Missouri Department of Conservation received one comment (Appendix A). The Rose Pond Conservation Area Planning Team carefully reviewed and considered these ideas as they finalized this document. A brief summary of public input themes, including how they were incorporated or why they were not, can be found below. Rather than respond to each individual comment, comments are grouped into general themes and are addressed collectively.

Department responses to themes and issues identified through Rose Pond Conservation Area public comment period

Would like to see waterfowl hunting restricted at Rose Pond Conservation Area.

As stated in the plan, there is a 27.25 acre waterfowl refuge on the Conservation Area as requested in the deed. For ease of maintaining the signs, this refuge boundary will be expanded to include all of Rose Pond and its associated wetland (see Figure 3 for proposed refuge boundary expansion). Waterfowl hunting is restricted in the refuge area. Other activities, such as fishing and trapping, are still allowed on the refuge by following area regulations.

References:

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2009). *Watershed and stream management guidelines for lands and waters managed by Missouri Department of Conservation*. Jefferson City, Missouri: Missouri Department of Conservation.

Maps:

Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: Land Cover Map

Figure 3: Easements, Refuge Boundary and Well Locations Map

Additional Appendices:

Appendix A: Rose Pond Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Figure 1: Area Map

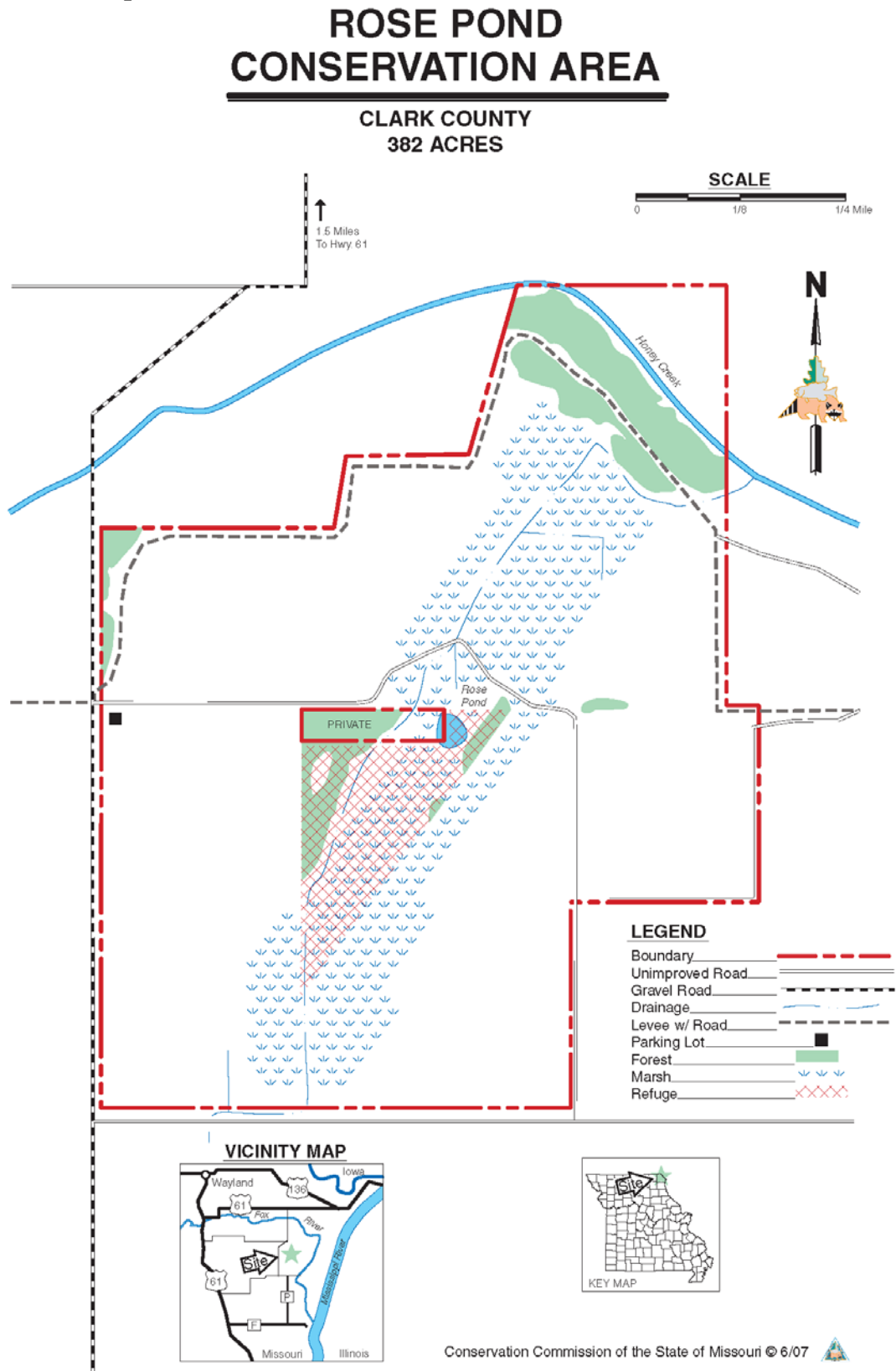


Figure 2: Land Cover Map

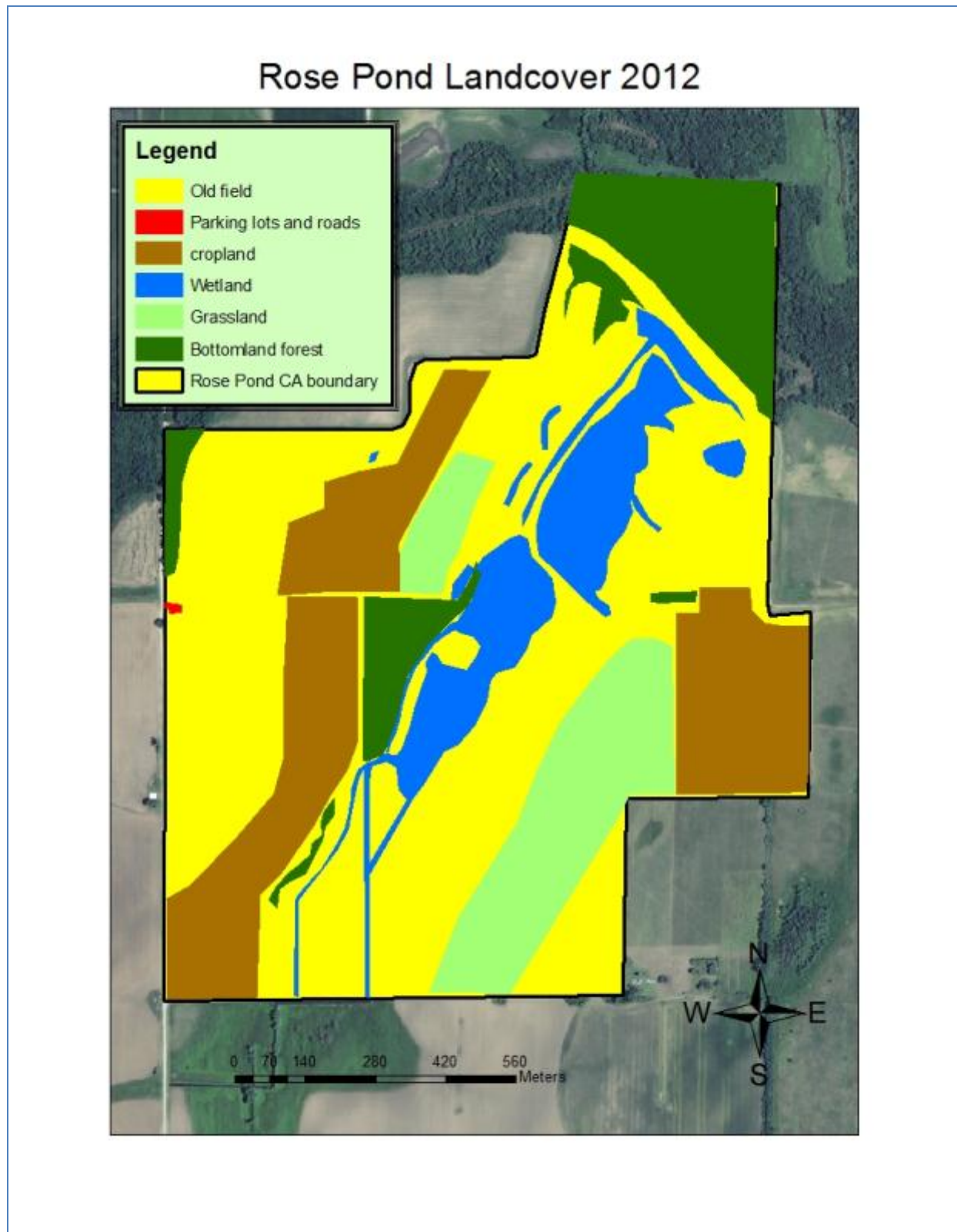
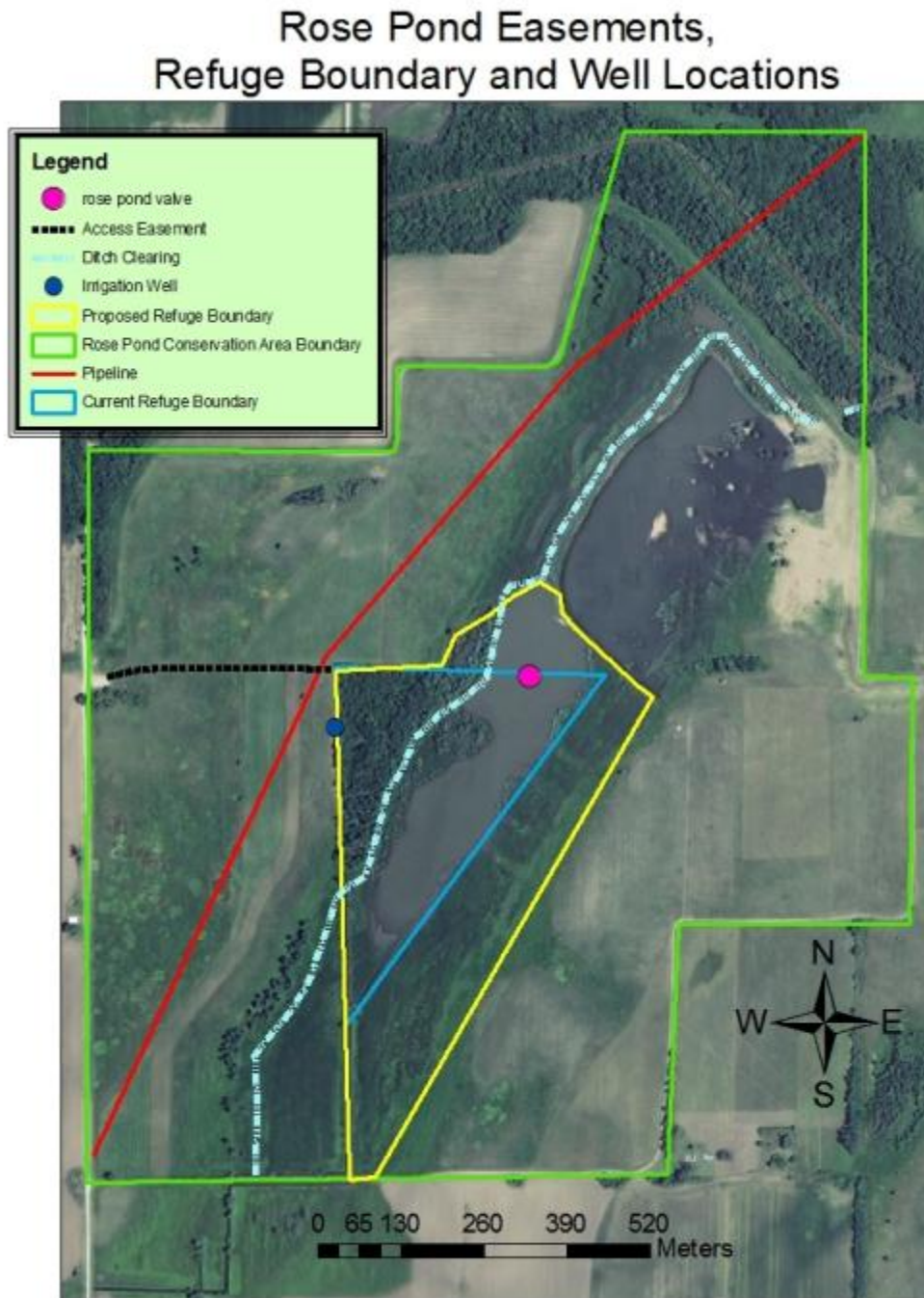


Figure 3: Easements, Refuge Boundary and Well Locations Map



Appendix A: Rose Pond Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (April 1-30, 2015):

Phone call to Area Manager: Caller's parents donated a portion of Rose Pond to MDC and requested that waterfowl hunting not be allowed on that portion of the pond. Caller's mother is still alive. She is upset that we allow waterfowl hunting on the rest of the area. Caller feels that his parents' intention was to have no waterfowl hunting throughout the whole area.